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24 July 1956

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MEMORANDUM FOR: [REDACTED]

SUBJECT : Status of Executive Officer Position for Detachment A

REFERENCE : SAPC-7946 dated 20 July 1956, paragraph 2.

1. I have read with interest and mild perplexity your remarks contained in the referenced memorandum regarding [REDACTED] interest in a replacement for [REDACTED] at "nothing higher than a GS-11". While I am, of course, inclined to question the complete wisdom of [REDACTED] projected use of this individual, i.e. as a Military Group Executive Officer, because of the original concept under which the Executive Officer position was established once accepting his premise, I remain unconvinced about the wisdom of selecting a person "no higher" than a GS-11.

2. From my own remembrance of military administration, the Executive Officer of an organization such as Detachment A, which has a full Colonel as its Commanding Officer, would usually be one grade below the Commander - or Lt Colonel in this instance. Under the assimilated rank system which we informally observe in this Agency, a GS-11 is the equivalent of a 1st Lieutenant in military rank. There is the additional doubt in my mind that unless we are able to locate an unusual GS-11, it is doubtful that he would have had sufficient background in Agency affairs to permit him to act as advisor to the Squadron Commander on Agency staff policies. Within CIA it is unlikely that a GS-11 would be occupying a position any higher than an Assistant Branch Chief in a small area division.

3. I believe we must also consider the fact that the Squadron Administrative Officer is classified at the grade of GS-13 which would, of course, make him senior both in rank and quite probably experience to [REDACTED] concept of the Executive Officer. I do not believe, therefore, that the GS-11 level is either feasible or practical in this instance and would make to you the concrete recommendation that the position be staffed at the GS-13 level as a minimum.

4. I neglected to mention one other factor in my recommendation and that is this: If, as Mr. Bissell has reaffirmed, the Executive Officer is to be the senior Agency representative charged with Agency activities, he cannot function as such in a realistic manner if his grade is not commensurate with his responsibilities. This in a

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military frame of reference would be the equivalent of having a junior officer representing a Colonel with senior staff elements abroad. I would appreciate your reactions on this matter and suggest that in my absence you convey your wishes to [REDACTED] so that we may make advance preparation for the selection of a replacement for [REDACTED] without delay.

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JAMES A. CUNNINGHAM, JR.
Director of Administration
PCS/DCI

Distribution:

- 1 - [REDACTED]
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